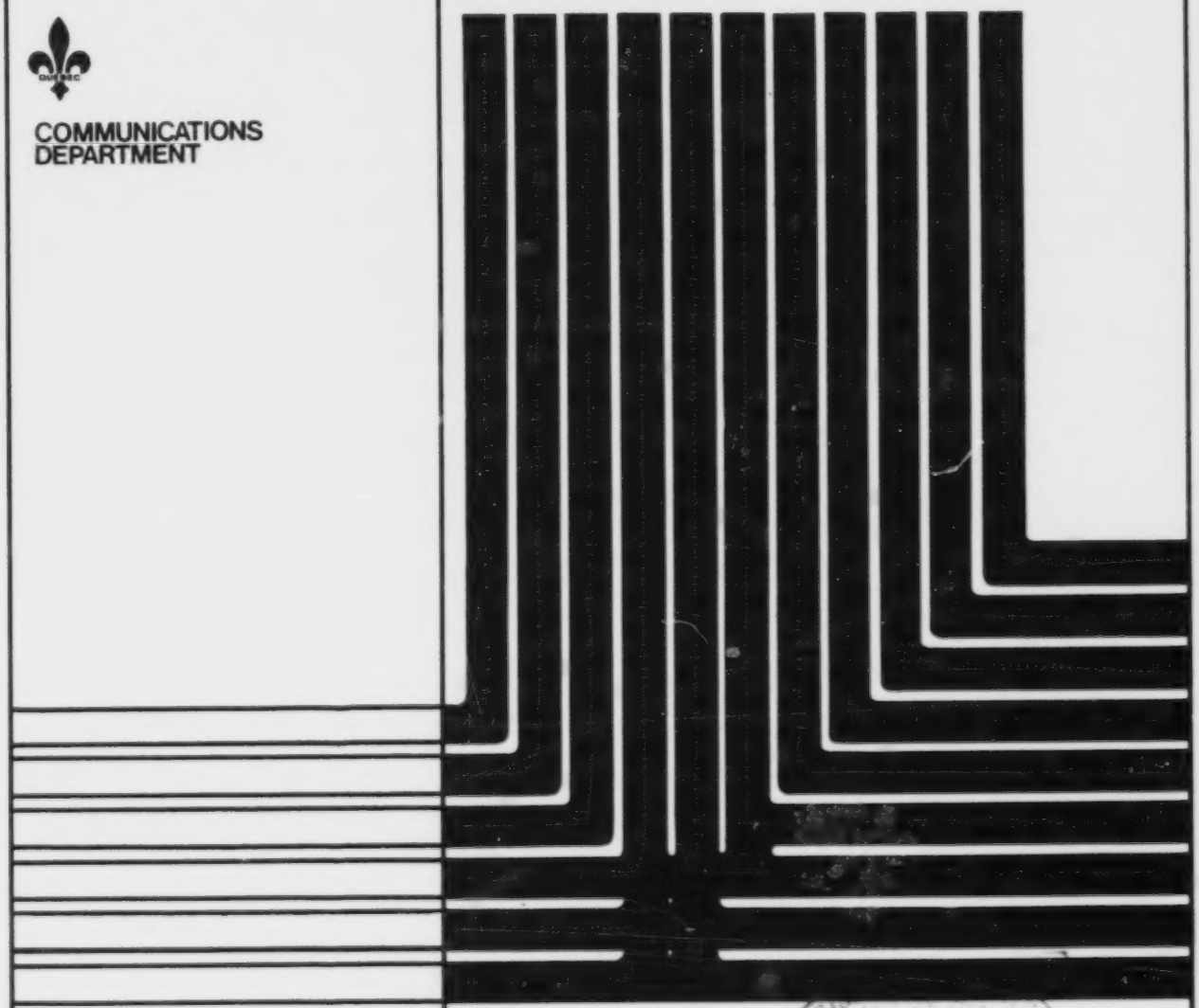
toward a québec communications policy



COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT

JEAN-PAUL L'ALLIER
MINISTER
OF COMMUNICATIONS

MAY 1971
WORKING PAPER

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
WITHDRAWN

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TOWARD A QUEBEC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT

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MAY 1971
WORKING PAPER

I

PREAMBLE 1

INTRODUCTION 3

PART I: THE STATE AND ITS ADMINISTRATION 12

I- The current situation 13

A- The State's principal instruments 14

1- The Public Service Board 14
2- The Official Publisher 15
3- The Duplicating Service 16
4- The Translation Service 17
5- The Québec Broadcasting Bureau 17
6- The Film Bureau 19
7- The Information and Publicity Bureau 20
8- The Communications Department 21

B- Other departments and bodies 24

C- The paragovernmental sector 26

II- Facts and effects 29

A- Balkanization 29

...in communications 29
...in information 30
...in publicity 30
...in printing 31
...in reception 31
...in exhibitions 31
...in translation 31
...in duplicating 32

B- Reorganization of production and concentration of purchasing power 32

...and four expected results 33

III- Objective and methods 34

A- The objective 34

B- The methods 34

1- Regrouping 34
2- New departmental structures 35
3- The Government Communications Branch 37
(a) Communication services within the Departments 38
(b) Government regional communication services 39

4- Coordination with paragovernmental bodies and the parapublic sector 39
5- Government documentation 40
6- Information and data bank 41
7- Closed-circuit television 42
8- Standardization of Government identification signs and stationery 42
9- Standardization of Government publications 43

ART II: THE CITIZEN AND THE STATE 45

I- The current situation 46

A- A task to continue 47

B- The citizen's communication difficulties 47

C- Some services still poorly adapted 48

D- Lack of coordination 48

II- Objective and methods 49

A- The objective 49

B- The methods 49

1- Regrouping decentralized services and information 49
2- Network for technological and living communications 49

3- Information and feedback network 50
4- Information services 50
5- Reception services 51
6- An exhibition service 51
7- Mobile information units 52
8- The Multi-Media Project (UHF) 52

PART III: THE STATE AND THE COMMUNITY 54

I- The current situation 55

A- Regulations 55

B- Jurisdictional matters 56

II- Objectives and methods 57

A- The Objectives 57

B- The methods 57

1- Amendments to the Public Service Board Act 57
2- Amendments to the Communications Department Act 58
3- Amendments to the Québec Broadcasting Bureau Act 59
4- A communications council 60

III- Jurisdictional matters 61

CONCLUSION 63

APPENDIX: QUEBEC'S POLICY ON COMMUNITY CABLES

"Québec has prime responsibility for the cultural environment of its community. For the same reason it has sole responsibility in this field, it must be agreed that this responsibility should extend to the life of each individual within the framework of what is today called Continuing Education".

....it is the most accurate interpreter of the Quebecers' socio-cultural world.

Robert Bourassa,
Chicoutimi,
September 26, 1970

The document which we are presenting today is not a White Paper, since we had neither the time nor the means to produce a document of that kind. Moreover, we felt that a Québec policy on Communications must be the result of as broad a consensus as possible.

This is a WORKING PAPER. It lays great stress on studies, inquiries, research work and reports made here and elsewhere in the vast, complicated field of modern communications. Also, it considers opinions already known or expressed by those who, around us, are aware of the importance of communications to the community.

This paper sets forth the major guidelines and rules for the elaboration of a policy in this field, and proposes a plan to be followed to that end, based on existing resources and given a minimum number of reforms and essential administrative regroupings within the Communications Department.

This paper should incite as great a number of Quebecers as possible to take part in the orientation and attainment of what may well become our true means of identification and of cultural, social and economic development.

With this in mind, then, during the coming months and in the light of progress made in defining more accurately and achieving the goals to be attained, we will consult with those citizens, groups and

"This decade will see a double revolution: a telecommunications revolution, incited by satellites and other inventions, and on information revolution incited by fantastic developments in the new field of computer science. This double revolution will completely change concepts of the world and life, methods of management and the structures of the organizations themselves".

(. . .)

"If for reasons of self-defence Québec decided to go it alone and not form part of the consortium in the field of data-processing, it would soon find itself relegated to the unevitable rank of a contemporary tribe, a status which awaits all communities which refuse to keep up with the times or are prevented from doing so".

"L'avenir des Québecois
by Léon Dion,
Sept-Jours, Nov. 15, 1970
pp. 11, 12

governments concerned with the importance of this policy for the future of Québec and of its people and capable of contributing to it in the interests of the entire community.

It is up to Québec to set up an overall communications policy. Such a policy cannot be dissociated from the development of Québec's educational system, its culture and everything pertaining to it. Although this policy must be coordinated with those of the other governments and consistent with the North American milieu, it must first of all be integrated to Quebec's priorities and so act as a guarantee that our society will be maintained and develop normally as a dynamic part of a Canadian and North-American entity.

A communications policy is not merely useful for Québec; it is essential, and becoming more so every day. The purpose of this first working paper is to render such a policy possible.

INTRODUCTION

Communications, a fact of modern life and a property of industrial and especially post-industrial societies, are developing at a staggering rate. An infinite number of variations exists in this field for both the instruments and their application; by reason of their deep penetration within our social fibers they become important factors in fundamental change not only of the environment and of living conditions but above all of those elements which make up the personality and very nature of individuals and civilizations, citizens and societies.

The importance of communications in economic life is obvious. It has increased to such an extent that the very livelihood of corporate bodies depends on it. Already, means of communication of prime concern to scientific and industrial research work, frequently give rise to basic changes in industry and affect every last employee.

Public administration and the administration of public bodies (governments, schools, hospitals, municipalities, and others) depend at least as much on communications for their operations and the quality of the services which they must render.

The effects are great. The benefits also can be great, but so can the risks and the dangers.

Means of communication are factors for regrouping individuals and peoples, but they also stress distances and tend to continually widen the gap between those who have them and those who do not, those to whom they are available and those to whom they are not, and those who control them and those whose lives are governed through them.

iformation distributed
the people by the public
thority must allow them
discuss the business
the State critically and
nstructively. That which
e State receives from
e people, on the other
nd, must indicate to the
ate what is required of
".

"Communicating I"
Report of the Task Force
on government informa-
tion, P. 47 - 1969.

Although they are factors of development and progress, they can also lead to a state of bondage and domination.

Whereas they are vehicles for the culture and specific identity of a majority or of a specific nation, they can also lead to the asphyxiation and disappearance of greater or lesser majorities or nations.

The fundamental rights of persons and societies, then, are beginning to be affected, in ways which have scarcely begun to be studied.

Communications are and will continue to be either an element of strength or a cause of weakness, an instrument for full development or one for the dismemberment and corrosion of societies.

More than perhaps anyone else, Québec and the Quebecers must face up to this dangerous challenge, which, because it is inevitable must be taken up and cannot be lost sight of. A Québec policy on communications is a condition for and guarantee of that specific identity and personality which identify us within Canada.

The general objectives of the Communications Department have been drawn up under the three following headings, bearing in mind the constant concern for the public interest, and to allow Quebecers to feel assured that at home they can "be themselves".

1- <u>For the people</u>

<u>The Department of Communications must ensure the inalienable right of the people of Québec to communication according to their cultural, social, economic and political needs.</u>

As the speed of information ncreases, the tendancy s for politics to move way from representation nd delegation of consti- uents toward immediate nvolvement of the entire ommunity in the central cts of decision".

Marshall McLuhan
"Understanding media" -
1970

Indeed, there is no provincial, federal or even international law setting forth right to communication or information. The expression "citizens of Québec" obviously includes both the French-speaking majority and the English, Indian, Eskimo and other minorities. Any pluralistic society owes it to itself to ensure the right to communication to all its citizens according to all their needs and in accordance with the objectives and priorities imposed by development of the territory.

2- For the State

The Department of Communications must provide the government and its bodies, directly or indirectly, with a modern communications system enabling them to assume their full responsibilities regarding the people of Québec.

To permit a maximum of existing and future investment, the Department must maintain and create technical networks, as they are required, along which government communications may be channeled, taking into account the economic situation and available resources.

In order that the government may be ensured of assuming all its responsibilities in the field of communications, these systems will have many functions. They will allow for all types of communications (telephone, conversations, transmission of information and data, and so on) between various sectors of the Administration. They will ensure the transmission on a permanent basis of government information to the public and make possible "feedback" on retroaction, or even "retroinformation" from the public to decision making centers, in order that the entire population may take part in the effective control and orientation of public business.

"The government's rôle in coordinating and planifying is one of the main problems that calls for the formulation of a clear systematic policy. The studies we have effected tend to think that it ought to be the principal agent, having as an aim dynamic stimulation rather than of fixed planning".

"Instant world"
Report on telecommunications in Canada -
Telecommission - 1971

3- For the community

The Department of Communications must provide and maintain a system of communications for Québec, integrated to the extraterritorial or international systems, which will facilitate and contribute toward the full development of all and the attainment of Québec's goals.

This will explain the necessity for the Québec Department of Communications to collaborate in a Canadian policy on communications, with particular emphasis on the orderly use of radio frequencies. Such collaboration is in no way inconsistent with the attainment of Québec's communications policy.

Moreover, to ensure the full maturity of all Quebecers, windows must be kept open to the world in matters of "software". Nothing is more tragic than the intellectual isolation of a nation or an ethnic group which has withdrawn into itself.

In order to facilitate Québec's industrial and technological development in the field of communications and telecommunications equipment, international cooperation must exist between Québec and other countries, particularly France.

The principal objectives mentioned above are the guidelines for this working paper. Alongside these are a number of lesser objectives, chief among which are the following:

* A modern public communications system for the whole of the province of Québec should be planned, taking account of the development of technology.

* The public service aspect of the communications systems essential to the community life of the people of the province should be recognized.

* All aspects of communications should be dealt with according to the values of all the people of Québec and to social change.

* A modern government communications system through which all citizens can be kept informed should be planned and developed.

* The production and distribution of all government information should be co-ordinated.

* The services of the State should be made accessible to individuals, thereby allowing them to keep informed and to express their opinions or those of their milieu.

* Permanent outside communication should be maintained for Québec.

* The rôle, rights and obligations of public service bodies in the field of communications should be determined, as well as whether or not they hold a territorial monopoly, and whether they are public or private.

* Encouragement should be given to production of a volume of goods and services which comply to the aspirations of all people of the Province.

* Research in communications (hardware and software) should be stimulated and rendered more democratic.

This list of objectives clearly shows how weak and insufficient government action is in the face of the communications challenge. But this is precisely the area where action must be instituted if the first objective, that of providing each person and group of persons with the best services possible, is to be rapidly attained.

"The rapid development of the technological means available to the mass media has changed not only Québec society but also the State's means of action and even its administrative processes."

Robert Bourassa,
Chicoutimi,
September 26, 1970

The action of the principal State agencies in the field of communications must be revised in the light of concepts of production, realization, distribution, commercialization, analysis, research and other matters. The organization of the government's internal services in the field of communications must be reviewed, and smooth-running regional services must also be set up; a continuing review of government information and publicity is essential.

Finally, a regrouping of services or fields of activity in the field of communications within the State will ensure that specialists and technicians in that field no longer act simply as managers but rather as real advisers both to the departments and to their own respective agencies.

Consequently, it will be necessary to train or retrain the personnel required to effect this permanent change brought about within the public and parapublic administration by modern communications.

The first part of this paper will be devoted to an outline of the existing situation within the government, a description of the goals to be reached in each sector mentioned above and a list of proposed long, medium and short term action to make Québec's communications policy an instrument for reforming, rejuvenating and improving public administration.

The action undertaken or described in the first part will obviously have a direct effect on each citizen and group of citizens.

The second part of the working paper will analyse the nature of the new services which can thus be provided to the public, and the means by which we intend to proceed in order to begin providing them as quickly as possible. It is becoming urgent for Québec to assume its full responsibility in the field of cable broadcasting, precisely because growth of the cable industry is closely related to the objectives mentioned above. Already several experiments are being carried out which allow citizens or groups of citizens to make fuller use of modern means of communications.

The third part will contain a study on the consequences of a communications policy for our Québec community, and of the legislative and administrative action to be taken to ensure that these are attained.

We do not claim that this is an exhaustive working paper. Indeed, it cannot deal with each of the principal matters in depth, and is limited to more general terms. In order to spell out the government's action in attaining its policy on communications, we intend to publish specific texts or manuals on certain questions. When the time is

right the Department will reveal the details of its policy on communications respecting television and, educational telecasting, especially as regards the Multi-Media project.

1. THE CURRENT SITUATION

. THE CURRENT SITUATION

No extensive study need be made of the various instruments of the State or of the bodies attached to it or under its jurisdiction to gain some impression of how the government's communications, information and publicity infrastructure grew in fits and starts. A glance at the Public Accounts and the Government spending estimates reveals that, at a very conservative estimate, a budget of some $24,000,000 (1971-72) was allocated to these activities in which more than 1100 personsare employed.

It seemed particularly expedient for the purposes of this paper to draw special attention to the existence and activity of certain bodies whose main activities are closely linked to the field under discussion. Still, almost all of the departments and bodies, in both the governmental and the paragovernmental sectors, have funds and personnel intended for communications, information and publicity purposes; along this line, it is well known that in particular the bodies of the paragovernmental sector, for example all the institutions in the education and social affairs sectors, have been investing considerable amounts in communications equipment.

The State's principal instruments

Among the State's principal instruments in the field of communications, information and publicity, we shall first discuss those whose activities are essentially related to that sector.

The Public Service Board

This Board succeeded the former Public Service Commission in 1939; its incorporating statute was completely revised in 1949 (R.S.Q., 1964, chapter 229) and it came under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transport and Communications until the Department of Communications was set up in 1969, when it came under that department's jurisdiction.

Over the years this administrative tribunal has supervised the setting up of various quasi-judicial services which have since become self-governing; until now its duties have been two-fold:

- the settlement of disputes arising out of the institution of various expropriation proceedings accessible to government departments and bodies, among others;

- the fixing of operating and tariff standards for bodies providing public services in communications (power of supervision and control).

Personnel

In office on March 31, 1969	26
In office on March 31, 1970	25
In office on March 31, 1971	24
Authorized, 1971-72 budget	41

Budget

1968-69	$287,200
1969-70	287,200
1970-71	275,900
1971-72	440,000

2- The Official Publisher

On the 1st of January, 1969, the Queen's Printer became the Québec Official Publisher and was attached to the Provincial Secretary's Department until that department's governing statute was repealed in 1969; he now falls under the jurisdiction of the President of the National Assembly. In addition to being responsible for the printing, publication and distribution of the Québec Official Gazette and the Statutes of Québec, he is entrusted in particular with the sale of government publications; he is not concerned with the gratuitous distribution of other publications.

The Official Publisher has only one office in Québec City and one sales outlet in Montréal. These publications are also available in various book stores and by mail.

The Official Publisher also has charge of a graphic arts service which is at the disposal of all departments, and members of his staff belong to various interdepartmental committees set up to ensure better consistency among government publications.

Personnel

- in office on March 31, 1969	38
- in office on March 31, 1970	42
- in office on March 31, 1971	43
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	49

Budget

1968-69	$ 350,800
1969-70	416,000
1970-71	439,400
1971-72	1,621,700

3- The Duplicating Service

The Duplicating Service does various ordinary and urgent printing work for the departments and bodies of the government. It now has a branch office in Montréal but most of its work is done in Québec City where it has equipment available valued at close to $1,000,000.

Personnel

- in office on March 31, 1969	105
- in office on March 31, 1970	88
- in office on March 31, 1971	86
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	107

Budget

1968-69	$ 799,800
1969-70	983,200
1970-71	901,900 *
1971-72	1,046,300

* Included in the Official Publisher's budget

4- The Translation Service

Since the dissolution of the Provincial Secretary's Department in 1969, the Translation Service has been under the jurisdiction of the President of the National Assembly. It is made up of three sections, an English section, a French section and a Foreign Language section, and is at the disposal of the various government departments and bodies, although some departments have set up their own translation services; in addition free-lance translators are engaged when necessary, on a fee basis.

Personnel

- in office on March 31, 1969	13
- in office on March 31, 1970	20
- in office on March 31, 1971	19
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	24

Budget

1968-69	$ 83,800
1969-70	126,100
1970-71	152,700
1971-72	360,500

5- The Québec Broadcasting Bureau

In February, 1968, the government availed itself of the Act creating Radio-Québec (1945, chapter 56) and put that Act into force by the allotment of a budget and the appointment of a board of directors; in this manner it created its own broadcasting agency.

In October, 1969, a new Act (1969, chapter 17) replaced the 1945 law and set up the Québec Broadcasting Bureau, entrusting it with the production of radio programs, telecasts and audio-visual material for educational purposes, and the coordination of production and purchases of audio-visual material for educational purposes by the departments and services of the government and of the bodies under their jurisdiction.

Radio-Québec's mandate, however, inherent to its coordinating and advisory activities, remained inoperative since no suitable regulations had been made and particularly following the institution of the Communications Department in 1969 which took over the Audio-Visual development Bureau in existence since November, 1967. Furthermore, as soon as the Communications Department was created, the QBB, like the IPB and the AVDB, came under its jurisdiction.

Although most of Radio-Québec's production has until now been intended for the Department of Education, its biggest client, this relative proportion is due to decrease by reason of anticipated orders from other government departments and bodies, and because of the versatility of its technical means and equipment ($2,500,000).

Personnel

- in office on March 31, 1969	N/A
- in office on March 31, 1970	249
- in office on March 31, 1971	314
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	444

Budget

1968-69	$ 5,095,000
1969-70	7,000,000
1970-71	5,948,000
1971-72	4,758,000

6- The Film Bureau

When the Provincial Secretary's Department Act was repealed in 1969, the Québec Film Bureau was put under the jurisdiction of the Cultural Affairs Department. Its principal duties are to coordinate, direct and supervise cinematographic work done for purposes other than those of education by government departments and services.

Along these lines, in 1968 the Bureau had seven documentary or administrative type films produced, and took photographs for all the government bodies; that year its distribution service authorized over 150,000 viewings.

Personnel

- in office on March 31, 1969	N/A
- in office on March 31, 1970	76
- in office on March 31, 1971	72
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	75

Budget

1968-69	$ 853,600
1969-70	830,100
1970-71	930,000
1971-72	1,037,400

7- The Information and Publicity Bureau

In its present form, the IPB came under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Secretary's Department in 1966. It was transferred from the Provincial Secretary's control to that of the Prime Minister on July 20, 1966 by Order in Council No. 1146. In 1969 its rôle was defined by the National Assembly (1969, chapter 26) which entrusted it with the information and publicity of the government departments and services and of all bodies responsible to them.

When the Department of Communications was created, the Minister of Communications was made answerable for the IPB.

Since the 1st of April 1971, the Information and Publicity Bureau has been attached to the Government Communications Branch (O.C. 1388). Because members of its specialized staff work within each department, the Bureau plays an important part in the planning, coordination and development of government communications. Recently the Bureau has been laying particular stress on the regionalization of its services so that both regional information and that obtained from anywhere in the province can be not only accessible but conveyed to the various regions. Accordingly the Bureau has offices in eight administrative regions.

The Bureau has also set up a television program which cable television firms transmit free of charge to various regions of the Province. This program is produced by the Bureau or by Radio-Québec.

In addition to these activities the Bureau maintains central information, publicity and public relations services.

Personnel

- in office on March 31, 1969	166
- in office on March 31, 1970	162
- in office on March 31, 1971	159
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	170

Budget

1968-69	$5,683,000	*
1969-70	5,250,000	*
1970-71	3,350,000	*
1971-72	3,133,000	*

*Does not include the budget for information campaigns which dropped from $900,000 in 1968-69 to $250,000 in 1970-71 and 1971-72.

8- The Department of Communications

The Department of Communications was established in December, 1969 (1969, chapter 65). Its principal functions are, among others, to supervise the communications networks established in the province of Québec and promote their establishment, development, adaptation and efficiency, to execute or cause to be executed research and inquiries on communications generally, to establish communication services for all the government departments and to prepare a communications policy for the province of Québec, to propose that policy to the government, to implement it and to supervise its application and coordinate its carrying out.

Personnel

- in office on March 31, 1969	Nil
- in office on March 31, 1970	19
- in office on March 31, 1971	81
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	278

Budget

1968-69	Nil *
1969-70	Nil *
1970-71	$1,200,000
1971-72	$12,323,000

* Does not include the budget of the telephone service transferred from the Department of Public Works to that of Communications by Order in Council No. 3158, dated August 19, 1970.

Review of budgets and personnel of the main government bodies in the field of communications

A- BUDGETS

	1968/69	1969/70	1970/71	1971/72
Public Service Board	287,200.	287,200.	275,900.	440,000.
Official Publisher	350,800.	416,000.	439,400.	1,621,700.
Duplicating Service	799,800.	983,200.	901,900.	1,046,300.*
Translation Service	83,800.	126,100.	152,700.	360,500.
Broadcasting Bureau	5,095,000.	7,000,000.	5,948,000.	4,758,000.
Film Bureau	853,600.	830,100.	930,000.	1,037,300.
Information and Publicity Bureau	5,683,000.	5,250,000.	3,350,000.	3,133,000.
Department of Communications	Nil	Nil	1,200,000.	12,323,000.
Information campaigns	900,000.	900,000.	250,000.	250,000.
TOTAL	14,053,200.	15,792,600.	13,447,900.	23,923,500.

* Included in the Official Publisher's budget for that year

B- PERSONNEL - in office on the

	31-3-1969	31-3-1970	31-3-1971	authorized - 1971/72 budget
Public Service Board	26	25	24	41
Official Publisher	38	42	43	49
Duplicating Service	105	88	86	107
Translation Service	13	20	19	24
Broadcasting Bureau	N/A	249	314	444
Film Bureau	N/A	76	72	75
Information and Publicity Bureau	166	162	159	170
Department of Communications	Nil	19	81	278
TOTAL	348	681	798	1,188

B- Other departments and bodies

Although the amounts directly allotted by the other departments and bodies of the government to information and publicity cannot be determined precisely by an individual study of various budgetary documents or of those related to the Public Accounts, there is enough evidence to give a very broad idea of the amounts involved.

Taking an example from the department and bodies above-mentioned whose rôle is fundamentally linked to the activities covered in this paper, almost the entire government administration and the bodies attached to it are collaborating or contributing toward planning, creation, production, realization, distribution, commercialization, analysis and research in this field; naturally some personnel has been assigned to these functions, but it is difficult to state the numbers involved precisely.

Nevertheless research done for the purpose has made it possible to draw up the following tables as regards the amounts involved.

Departmental expenditures on communications, information and publicity (Public Accounts for the year ended March 31, 1970)

DEPARTMENT	COMM.	INF/PUB	DEPARTMENT	COMM.	INF/PUB
Cultural Affairs	35,760,03	560,366.03	Revenue	941,275.71	4,040.60
Intergovernmental Affairs	37,915.78	55,617.47	Natural Resources	63,009.43	114,596.23
Municipal Affairs	13,823.24	63,331.47	Health	223,307.94	26,211.94
Agriculture and Colon'n	294,220.11	306,506.88	Provinc.Secretary	41,364.13	446.78
National Assembly	27,120.89	10,933.60	Lands and Forests	142,986.71	21,116.99
Executive Council	149,146.89	4,024,693.43	Tourism, Fish & Game	124,862.69	1,669,780.14
Education	228,484.63	466,340.43	Transport and Communic'ns	490,997.97	48,715.65
Family and Soc.Welf.	463,615.96	15,254.35	Labour and Manpower	104,543.07	100,362.94
Finance	18,230.08	5,464.70	Public Works	*6,042,115.27	--------
Immigration	2,930.52	123,271.36	Roads	230,801.18	25,540.46
Industry and Commerce	46,078.48	440,854.09	Debt Service	------	59,283.70
Finan. Inst's	6,986.90	2,621.57			
Justice	1,838,508.69	13,886.66	TOTAL	11,568,086.30	8,159,237.56

* Includes the budget of the government telephone network

Annual revenue of certain public bodies

	1967-68	1968-69	1969-70
Qué. Deposit and Investm't Fund	--------	35,307,000	55,825,000
Workmen's Comp. Commission	68,280,000	80,079,000	88,995,000
Minimum Wage Commission	3,726,000	3,962,000	4,744,000
Hydro-Québec	365,703,000	397,828,000	431,108,000
Autoroutes Authority	11,539,000	13,131,000	14,018,000
Régie de la Place des Arts	1,796,000	1,394,000	1,365,000
Québec Liquor Board	197,845,000	128,564,000	205,618,000
Québec Pension Board	242,095,000	267,323,000	318,861,000

Obviously the list shown in the preceding table is far from complete; over 100 bodies could well be added to it, and only by continuing the research already begun into the corresponding budgets and personnel assigned to these activities may an adequate idea be obtained of the resources devoted to this field by the State. For this reason, the government recently approved the setting up of a task force of representatives from the Departments of Communications, the Civil Service and Finance to make a precise inventory of these elements.

The paragovernmental sector

Several hundred organizations receive annual government subsidies which in many cases constitute the major portion of their operating and capitalization budgets. This applies in particular to the sectors of education, social affairs and health.

Although it is extremely difficult at present to determine the share of their budgets assigned by these bodies to the purchase and use of communications equipment, this must be studied and analysed immediately because of the vast sums of money and large numbers of persons so involved.

The following tables bring some extremely revealing data to light in only the two sectors mentioned above.

Amounts paid by the Department of Education to CEGEPs, school boards, private institutions and universities

	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72
CEGEPs	68,320,000	98,195,000	123,100,000
School boards	594,525,000	729,538,000	856,092,000
Private institutions	21,768,000	28,918,000	30,000,000
Universities	120,390,000	123,985,000	170,933,000
TOTAL	805, 003,000	980,636,000	1,180,125,000

Amounts paid by the Department of Social Affairs to hospitals, social agencies, rehabilitation centers and others

	1969-70 *	1970-71 *	1971-72 *
	782,495,000	1,021,736,000	1, 240,954,000
TOTAL	782,495,000	1, 021,736,000	1, 240,954,000

*This amount represents the money paid by the Department of Health and the Department of Family and Social Welfare.

Thus it can be seen that the money involved solely in the paragovernmental sector constitutes a major share of government spending, particularly when added to that sometimes allotted to the same purposes indirectly or correspondingly by the government departments and bodies.

In other words, the budgets and personnel of the State's principal instruments in this sector represent only the visible part of a great iceberg which is growing progressively each year. This accelerated rate of growth moreover, reflects that noted during the past ten years in private enterprise.

II- FACTS AND EFFECTS

A- Balkanization

...in communications

Although the list of public bodies given above is far from exhaustive, it can readily be seen that there is real Balkanization at that level. Account must be taken, however, of the frequent difficulties involved in precisely determining the real purpose to which certain money or personnel is allotted even though their official use does not appear related to the Communications sector, although they are in fact used for this kind of activity. In practice this prevents a pooling of resources which would enable the State to draw up and elaborate a coherent policy in this sector so as to increase the profitability of the resources presently available there.

In addition, the lack of bookkeeping and standardization in this sector leads to a disintegration of the State's purchasing power, presenting it from acting as the powerful lever it should be for stimulating the establishment of a communications industry in Québec. The economic factors derived from this industry could contribute not only to creating some of the jobs we need but also to improving our trade balance with the outside, if account is taken solely of the fact that by 1980 this economic sector will rank third in North America.

Also, the special interest which this instant world holds for the Québec community can be explained *a fortiori* since Québec in no way lays in this field and should even be in a position to enter it and progress there at the same rate as any other community, possibly including our great neighbour to the South.

...in information

Despite recent laudable efforts at regrouping, the greatest confusion still reigns at certain levels as regards government information. Persons whose work is directly related to information are described as preparing documents or doing research; in the audio-visual field, screenplay writers are called "idea men" and writers of educational texts.

...in publicity

Contradictory objectives are seen in government publicity also. An advertizement from the Department of Tourism in a recent magazine invited Americans to come and visit Québec's covered bridges, while in the same magazine another advertisement from the Department of Industry and Commerce described Québec as a leader in modern technology. We can never be sure that this kind of thing will not recur again unless some sort of essential coordination is set up between the Department of Tourism and certain paragovernmental bodies.

...in printing

The world of publications can be compared to the animal kingdom where everything is created, distributed, ramified, resurrected and displayed ad infinitum. An incomplete study made only of publications sold to the public revealed that some 680 of these were circulating in the government services; to this list must be added the great multitude of folders, free magazines and irregularly published bulletins.

...in reception

Whenever an ordinary person wishes to obtain a piece of information, he must go through a seemingly endless maze. There is no policy governing this sector. Each civil servant is concerned only with his own needs, and as a result the ordinary person has no way of knowing to whom he must apply to obtain information on the Water Board, the Social Welfare Court or the training schools. Civil servants are no better served in this respect since for all practical purposes internal communications simply reflect the situation affecting ordinary people every day.

...in exhibitions

Québec's participation in regional exhibitions and even in those of a broader scope is all too frequently done with no planning or consistancy. Cases have been observed in which no fewer than eleven different departments or bodies set their stands up in a row with no attention being paid to coordination; even their objectives did not appear related.

...in translation

Notwithstanding obvious needs, translation has not progressed normally within the government, and yet there is a great need for it throughout the Province and particularly in Montréal with its mixed population.

...in document reproduction

There is equipment for printing and reproduction almost everywhere but no one can ever inventorize it, establish its usefulness or systematise its purchase and performance.

B- Reorganization of production and concentration of purchasing power

Therefore, the objectives set out in this document, which should constitute the first stage of the new communications policy, merit immediate attention. From the hundreds of examples which have already been studied, the following case, making possible a link between the Québec Official Publisher's activities and the information and advertising budgets, solely where calls for tenders are concerned, could bring about the following benefits:

(1) The Québec Official Publisher could publish calls for tenders in the Official Gazette to which suppliers would accordingly subscribe.

(2) There are 15,000 suppliers approved by the General Purchasing Service and a subscription to the Official Gazette costs $20 a year. The Government could consequently make a significant profit without hurting private enterprise.

(3) The Information and Publicity Bureau would cease publishing calls for tenders in the daily newspapers. These entails an annual cost of 350 000 to 400 000 dollars which could then be earmarked for real industrial promotion.

...and 4 expected results

Actually, it can already be said that the simple fact of eliminating the duplications denounced on all sides will make possible the financing of a large number of the new projects demanded by all the administrations concerned.

Moreover, the rational commercialization of government production will bring in a considerable amount of money.

"Today, foreseeable developments in the technology of telecommunications and computers hold possibilities of a more convenient and satisfying way of life, the satisfaction being measured in spiritual as well as material terms. New and emerging techniques will offer access to information on a scale hitherto unimaginable, together with opportunities for a much wider participation in community affairs and the democratic process."

Instant World

A Report on Telecommunications in Canada - Telecommission - 1971 p. 5

The obvious impact of the government's purchasing power in this sector could permit a great increase in and appreciable support of the measures to stimulate investment, which have already been elaborated at different levels.

Finally, it seems obvious that the Civil Service's efficiency would increase noticeably in the future.

III- OBJECTIVE AND METHODS

A- The Objective

The aim of the Government's endeavour must be the immediate development of a modern efficient system of administrative communication which would coordinate and transmit Government information.

B- The Methods

1. Regrouping

All State communications media and services will be gradually regrouped under one department.

The Information and Publicity Bureau's services were attached to the Communications Branch of the Department of Communication by Order in Council No. 1388, April 7, 1971.

Moreover, the Official Publisher, his Duplicating Service and the Translation Service, formerly under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Secretary's Department and now under that of the National Assembly, will soon be transfered to the Department of Communications.

The Instructional Media Service (SMTE) of the Department of Education has recently been united with other services to form the General Educational Means Service.

Close cooperation in coordinating audio-visual production is rapidly developing between the departments of Education and Communications.

The Québec Film Bureau, the Cinema Supervisory Board and the Ciné-Parcs Committee, on the other hand, are still under the jurisdiction of the Department of Cultural Affairs since their cooperation is essential to the elaboration of the cinema policy which that Department is going to set up. The departments of Communications and Cultural Affairs are cooperating closely, however, in coordinating common technical services.

2. New departmental structures

The various regroupings already carried out or proposed for the near future, and the next stages of the communications policy, obviously require appropriate departmental structures.

From the outset, the Department has had an Administration Branch, which will acquire major importance. In particular, the Personnel Service will be responsible for everyday personnel management, but its principal duty will be to draw up and carry out training and refresher courses for agents and civil servants within the Department's various job categories. The first attempt to carry out the proposed policy will be made with personnel already working for the Civil Service. New personnel must however be recruited through competitive examinations in keeping with Civil Service standards. The Department will make a special effort to attract to these jobs young university graduates, as well as Québec students specializing in communications abroad. This policy will be sufficiently

publicized and the Québec Department of Education has already been contacted for this purpose.

Order in Council 1388, dated April 7, 1971, officially created the Engineering Branch which is responsible for standardization, uniformity, preparation, regulations and technical studies respecting government and para-government communications equipment as well as their compatibility.

Order in Council 3158, August 19, 1970 set up an Operations Branch whose main duty will be to acquaint itself with, appraise and coordinate all State requirements regarding communications, to meet them systematically in accordance with technological and financial capacity, and, in coordination with the Government General Purchasing Service, to serve as the only body dealing with all suppliers of communications systems.

The Government Publishing Branch will be created as soon as possible. This Branch will gradually take over the Québec Official Publisher's work in graphics and editing as well as the work done by his Duplicating Service, the Information and Publicity Bureau and the Translation Service. It will also take over the work and the responsibilities of the Treasury Board's Publications Committee. The Official Publisher will retain his present status within the new Branch, and his powers will be modified to enable him to use his services to set up a complete and integrated system for the distribution and commercialization of all governmental and paragovernmental productions.

The Government Publishing Branch will also include the service in charge of audio-visual production which will take over the Information and Publicity Bureau's work in audio-visual production and, more generally, that of all the other government agencies involved in this field. It will coordinate production for government purposes and depending on the profit-making standards established and the government agencies' production capacity, make the QRTB, the Film Bureau or even private enterprise responsible for production

As an integral part of a communications policy, amendments to the Radio-Québec Act will be proposed to permit Radio-Québec to fully assume its privileged rôle of State producer in the audio-visual field.

A Research Branch will also be set up. Basically multidisciplinarian, it will work with the universities and coordinate all government research in communications. The Department of Communications and the University of Québec have already signed an agreement on communications research. The present Engineering Branch, however, will be responsible for coordinating research in communication techniques and for advising the Department and the Government on the allotment of public lands for communications purposes.

3. **The Government Communications Branch**

The objective of this Branch, which is the most important one, will be to set up in each department a Communications Service for which the different departments will be responsible. These services will combine

all the systems, resources and duties involved in communications and will include, in particular, the following spheres:

- information
- telephony
- exhibitions
- publicity
- telecommunications
- radio communications
- radio
- television
- educational films and documentaries
- photographs
- records
- cassettes
- printed matter
- translation
- duplication
- teleprocessing
- data bank

a) Communications services within the departments

These communications services will be under the jurisdiction of their respective departments. The Department of Communications, however, will coordinate them through its Government Communications Branch. Personnel recruitment standards, as well as operating standards, will be set up and applied by the Department of Communications. The communications services within the departments will thus become advisors to their departments on all aspects of communications. Although it is obvious that all information projects must originate with the individual departments, the Department of Communications will nevertheless remain the coordinator and technical advisor. It will also provide or have provided the professional services required to fulfill the communications needs and objectives of each department.

While traditionally, most information services within the departments served principally to fulfill the needs of the various departmental services, the utmost will be done to make the new services act primarily as advisory services in communications and information although they would of course be responsible for carrying out each department's projects and programs.

b) Government regional communications services

The Government Communications Branch's second and equally important task is to set up in each administrative region and in any other designated region of Québec, government communications services endowed with the power to use, under its responsibility, any means of communication, such as regional cable services, mobile information units and local production teams necessary to make government information available throughout these regions and enable the citizens to express their opinions on any matter of public interest.

These regional services will resemble the departmental services in their particular duties, but, by definition, they will be involved in a much wider sphere of activity; although directly responsible to the Department of Communications, each service will retain a certain autonomy.

4. Coordination with paragovernmental bodies and the parapublic sector.

The Government Communications Branch will also be responsible for standardizing relations in communications between the Government and the governmental bodies.

The largest investments in communications and particularly in audio-visual services are made primarily in the parapublic sector (colleges, universities, hospitals, etc.). It is important that the use of public funds in this sector be coordinated, not only so that our equipment may be standardized and used to its full capacity, but also so that we will one day be able to orient the industry.

Coordination will be easier once the General Council for Communications, mentioned further on in this paper, is created.

5. Government documentation

The development of the information sciences undoubtedly demands a redefinition of the rôle of libraries, and more particularly a reevaluation of the purpose of government libraries, with the exception of the Québec National Library and the Library of the Québec Legislature which have special rôles and are, moreover, governed by special laws.

The Library, source of information and documentation, must be part of a whole in order to efficiently carry out its objectives which consist not only of acquiring documents, but, more important, of processing and distributing them. At present there are 48 libraries in operation, 31 of which have been functioning since 1960. Altogether the collections in these libraries contain some 350 000 documents while the budget provided for acquiring documents is approximately $300 000. On the basis of this figure, the size of the budgets set aside each year for government libraries may be estimated at more than $1 320 000. These statistics reveal the lack of a clear distinction between libraries and documentation centers.

The lack of coordination at all levels is a stumbling block in the present system's operation. All Government libraries with the exception of the Québec National Library and the Library of the Québec Legislature which are, by definition, excluded from the libraries under discussion, must be regrouped under the Authority of the Department's Government Communications Branch. Within this general reorganization, certain special libraries would have to be grouped administratively on the basis of their services or their layout.

A Library Service must be set up within the Government Communications Branch to oversee the amalgamated and special libraries mentioned above.

6. Information and Data Bank

So far, little has been done within the Québec public administration to really coordinate the general information needed if the administration is to run smoothly and government services are to be available to citizens. The same holds true for the regulations applying to the various departments and bodies. We are also beginning to use data processing in the analysis and compilation of legislation.

If members of parliament, civil servants and journalists are to get their work done, Québec's legislation and regulations must be readily available for immediate consultation. Everyone would then be in a position to judge the meaning, the effect and the relative importance of actions taken or proposed.

The Department of Communications will help to speed up the development and the introduction of these banks within the administration as much as possible with its studies, research and specialized personnel.

7. Closed-circuit television

A closed-circuit television system would obviously be a highly desirable addition to Parliament Hill, at least in those buildings presently under construction. The principal administrative units and sub-units would then be connected. Such a system can be used in an infinity of ways to improve administration and management. All information would become immediately available to all the administrators and civil servants to whom it could prove useful. It would come directly from its original source, with neither delay or distortion.

It would then be possible to increase the tempo of administrative reform in certain particular sectors such as the administration of finance and bookkeeping, the coordination of identical services within different departments, and the availability of information on the administrative action being taken in the paragovernmental agencies, offices, organizations, and so forth.

This internal closed-circuit television system could then be extended to include the Montréal region and later the other administrative regions of Québec.

8. Standardization of Government identification signs and stationery

The Government has undertaken to standardize its identification signs. This will lead to considerable savings and enable the Government to project a stronger, and more dynamic image of its administrative presence throughout Québec.

9. Standardization of Government publications

The standardization of Government publications is certainly one of the most important of the short-term projects to be undertaken by the Department.

The work begun in this area must be speeded up so that all Government publications, whether from a department or a dependent agency, have a suitable, modern appearance. The grouping of resources for design, development production as well as distribution purposes will permit the State to make savings and, consequently, offer extra services in this domain.

The updating of publications has already been put off for too long; a perpetual and public inventory corresponding to the dynamic reorganization of the centers of documentation and distribution, and the constant re-evaluation of publications would remedy this situation. Internal communications within the administration would then improve noticeably and audio-visual aids could profitably complement printed matter as a means of creating and maintaining permanent relations among administrators themselves, and between them and the public.

When acted upon, these short- and medium-term objectives, will lead to the creation of an internal communications system which should ensure better coordination, not only in those sectors peculiar to communications, but in all sectors of the administration. Besides ensuring increased vigor and efficiency in the Civil Service, its departments, boards, bureaus and agencies, the new system will also be an essential factor in administrative reform.

Moreover, this will enable every public sector agency to work out its programs in terms of human resources as well as in terms of equipment by taking into consideration a collective policy based not on an arbitrary decision by the Department of Communications, but on plans meant to ensure that each agency's equipment complements the equipment held in common without losing sight of the needs of the group.

PART II

THE CITIZEN AND THE STATE

I- THE CURRENT SITUATION

"It is the State's duty to guarantee timely, complete and objective information on the areas in which it is concerned; it is the citizen's right to receive this information."

Communicating I
Report of the task force on Federal Government information
1969 - p. 53

At the moment, there are eight regional information offices in Québec set up by the Information and Publicity Bureau in:

Montréal
Hull
Rouyn-Noranda
Trois-Rivières
Chicoutimi
Sherbrooke
Québec
Rimouski

In addition to these eight offices, the various Québec Government departments and organizations have over 740 offices in 163 towns and villages of Québec. For example,

Chicoutimi	has 17
Montréal	has 59
Québec	has 71
Sherbrooke	has 19
Trois-Rivières	has 18

Many of these Government offices have information services. Unfortunately, being so numerous and scattered, they cannot hope to offer top quality information at all times and, too often, citizens do not know where to go to get reliable information without delay.

"The lack of clear information available to all those who wish to participate in the democratic process is fast becoming one of the great tragedies of our time."

Communicating I
Report of the task force on Federal Government information
1969 p. 4

A- **A continuing effort**

It is essential that the administration continue in its effort to set up regional structures, especially in the information field. It is also necessary to realize that we cannot use identical methods and that structures for information and communications in large urban centers and in all the regions of Québec. The Department must try to find appropriate solutions to the problem of transmitting administrative and other information to the urban populations as well as the rural populations.

B- **The citizen's communication difficulties**

"I submit that a government body has a fundamental duty to inform the general public. It should inform the public both on the citizen's rights, privileges and obligations under the laws entrusted to its administration, and on its internal organization and procedure. It should furthermore take into account that the persons to whom this information is directed differ greatly in their level of understanding."

The Public Protector, first annual report - 1969

Today, pointing out the difficulties the average citizen encounters in communicating with the administration has become a commonplace procedure. The studies and action undertaken to analyse and correct this situation must be carried on at an increased tempo to arrive at a point where the public is as completely as possible informed as to the information and services he can and must obtain from the Government. In his relations with the State and the administration, every citizen should be able to count on competent people able to direct him to the source of a satisfactory answer to his questions.

C- **Badly adapted services**

The current situation proves that the public's needs in information and communication are greater than ever. In addition, it shows that the efforts of the administration and the amount of energy and money spent are also greater than ever. Over the past few years, the services whose main duty is to communicate directly with the public have multiplied at a rather rapid rate. Too often, however, they are badly adapted to their relatively new function.

D- **Lack of coordination**

But it is the lack of coordination between the administration's various decentralized services that first strikes the informed abserver. This lack of coordination is itself often due to insufficient knowledge of the structures on the part of the people and a resultant lack of permanent and properly used internal communications.

Therefore, in order to provide individual citizens as well as groups of citizens with the services they have a right to expect from their government and the administration, the Department of Communications must devote itself above all to the coordination and standardization of those services already available to the public.

No reorganization can be really valid unless it is preceded by a serious analysis of existing services and a supreme effort to coordinate these services so that, in as far as it is possible, they reach their objective of direct communication with the public, and also fulfill their sectorial technical duties.

II- OBJECTIVE AND METHODS

A- The objective

In order to obtain information and make his personal viewpoint known, the average citizen must have access to all the different methods of communicating with the State services. A modern and public communications system which takes technological development into account must be planned and set up in Québec.

B- The methods

1. Regrouping decentralized services and information

Most departments have decentralized services, either in Québec's administrative regions or even in various relatively important cities. The Department of Communications does not plan to undertake a physical regrouping of Government services within the cities of Québec. It is nevertheless possible to avoid having people sent from office to office in search of information or a solution to their problem, by improving the communications media and the electronic devices connecting them.

The main function of the Government communications services thus set up will be to regroup the decentralized services belonging to the various Government departments and agencies by means of electronic communications.

2. A network for technological and living communications

If it works out as planned, this regrouping will result in the creation of a network for technological and living communications which will have to be linked to centers of development, production, dissemination, analysis and research. This

will be the rôle of the Department of Communications. The quality of the technical services must be established once and for all, not only on the departmental, but also on the regional level, and personnel specialized in communications and information must be able to move from a department or agency to a region and eventually to a position outside Québec, all in accordance with a career plan and in keeping with the logical development of the experience and knowledge of a communications specialist.

3. **A distribution and feedback network**

"Two-way, up-to-date and accurate information is absolutely necessary to increased participation and improved social efficiency on the part of the Government."

Communicating II
1969 - p. 26

Basically, the distribution of Government information and printed and audio-visual documents from the Department of Communications or the Government production officers is the responsibility of all the Government communications services and the distribution centers or sub-centers which may be attached to them. In return, the regional services will also guarantee the citizen's right to the use of modern communications media enabling him to participate actively, either as an individual or as a member of a group, in drawing up, carrying out, and even criticizing Government objectives.

4. **Information services**

For many different reasons, citizens are less and less able to go out of their way to obtain desired information on one government service or another, or even put forward their opinions, or make a relevant comment on some administrative action. Modern communications techniques will soon enable the provincial administration to develop telephone or mail information services which, if linked to central information banks, will make it possible for the public to obtain, within a matter

of hours, precise information on all the governmental and paragovernmental services, and eventually, on any pertinent statistical information available.

Studies underway within the Department of Communications will be accelerated and pilot experiments should be carried out shortly in limited sections of Québec to determine actual needs.

5. Reception services

The Department is also studying the possibility and the advisability of setting up reception and information services which could assist the administration through the Government communications services.

Specialized personnel trained for this purpose and completely familiar with the administrative machinery will facilitate contacts between the public and the Government administration.

6. An Exhibition service

As Québec's participation in various exhibitions and shows becomes increasingly noticeable so does the lack of coordination too often found between the Government's various contributions and those of its agencies.

It should be up to the Department of Communications to advise the Government on its overall plan when it participates in exhibitions and shows. The Government could then make more frequent public appearances, thus making direct contact possible between the people and the State employees who deal everyday with matters concerning them.

7. Mobile information units

The Department should continue the experiment begun by the Information and Publicity Bureau by sending out "Communications - Québec" trailers and by satisfying the special needs of certain regional groups of citizens, such as those of Ste. Scholastique and Bécancour.

These mobile units, supplied with the most modern equipment, enable the citizens to communicate directly and on the spot with the authorized representatives of the main departments concerned with local or regional matters. These representatives remain in constant contact with the administration in Québec and in all cases, they answer requests for information from the citizens within a few hours if not instantly. This arrangement serves not only to satisfy the needs of the people, but also to gather their comments and criticisms with a view to improving the quality of the services rendered.

8. The Multi-Media Project (UHF)

Of all the technical projects being studied by the Department of Communications, Multi-media is undoubtedly the most important. The Department of Education is in charge of this project, but it is up to the Department of Communications, within the framework of an administrative commission for the project, to plan and develop the technical infrastructure required to carry out the project.

It has been established and accepted for all practical purposes, that the regular television stations, whether State-owned or privately owned, are no longer sufficient for our needs.

As the Government demand for air time for educational television increases, the time available for such programs at suitable hours decreases.

Moreover, it is not possible to reach either the objectives or the audience desired with the present cablecasting network.

Therefore, we must study methods of setting up a new UHF broadcasting structure. The technical application of this project in the Montréal region where the Multi-Media Project will be put into effect, could serve as the basis for a complete and integrated system of UHF telecasting for educational purposes. Whether this system can be set up, however, depends on studies not yet carried out or completed and even more on the analysis of the needs of the various Québec departments in this area.

This entire question will be dealt with in the text of a precise plan of action the Department of Communications will draw up once the Government decisions have been made.

PART III

THE STATE AND THE COMMUNITY

I- THE CURRENT SITUATION

A- Regulations

"The telephone being an essential public service, the Government must have the right of supervision over it and to this end every telephone company doing business in Québec will be subject to control by the Québec Public Service Board as regards all matters of rates, points of connection, cost of apparatus and relations among companies. The Government will obtain the necessary powers by means within its authority."

1966 Québec Liberal Party Program, p. 19

Where regulations concerning communications are concerned, Québec has worked through its Public Service Board for over 40 years (with the exception of matters under the jurisdiction of the Cinema Supervisory Board and the Ciné-Parcs Committee).

The Public service Board exercises its jurisdiction over more than 50 public telephone companies extending over half its territory. Two other companies under Federal jurisdiction account for the rest of the territory. Consequently, it has not been possible to establish a uniform or coherent policy for telephone companies in Québec. Seven of the ten provinces are in sole charge of their telephone companies, it must be noted.

The Public Service Board exercises its power of control and supervision and its quasi-judicial functions:

- over the entire telephone industry and its full range of communications services (with the exception of the two cases mentioned above); in general, it establishes standards and conditions for entering new areas and for servicing clients, and sets rates and profit ceilings. It has directed the introduction of communications arrangements better adapted to the socio-economic realities of the territory and has encouraged action programs which are distinctively Québec's own.

- over matters involving expropriations.

B- Jurisdictional matters

For its part little by little the Federal Government has assumed more and more power over communications. Until recently, it has even indicated its firm intention to further define and increase its action in this field. Above and beyond the activities of CN - CP, Telesat and the three telephone companies under its jurisdiction (out of more than 1 200 in Canada, and two of which operate in Québec), the Federal Government, has progressively extended its regulatory authority over radio, television and finally cablecasting, using as a basis its power to coordinate the distribution of frequencies for radio communications.

II- OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

A- The objectives

Communications networks essential to community life in Québec are in fact a public service and this must be acknowledged.

All aspects of communications must be handled with the values of the entire population and its particular social changes in mind.

Measures must be taken to encourage the production of communications equipment and services in Québec and the development of the Québec communications industry.

Permanent communications between Québec and the exterior must be guaranteed.

B- The methods

1- Amendments to the Public Service Board Act

This board must become a real Communications Board.

In the first stage of legislation, which will soon be carried out, its powers will be increased considerably and its human and financial resources increased accordingly. Its jurisdiction will be extended to include the public agencies belonging to communications services which are known to be "public services", and particularly the cablecasting industry, so that the public can profit

as soon as possible, and at the most economical rates, from the fruits of technological developments and State regulation of services known to be essential to community life. Various legislative measures will provide the Board with the means of carrying out its responsibilities smoothly and rapidly and of coordinating its activities with Québec's overall communications policy.

In a second stage of legislation to follow later, the Board will relinquish the power of expropriation to another institution. It will then be able to devote its time entirely to the vast field of communications and give increased attention to translating the demands of continuous social evolution into terms of the common good and the public interest.

True crossroads of the many sections of the public which, sometimes confusedly, express their communications needs, and the producers of equipment and services who claim they provide satisfactory solutions, the Board will try to bring about a fairer representation of the community's wishes as regards communications. It will obviously take into account the economic imperatives of those who produce equipment and provide services, but its first concern will be for social priorities.

2- Amendments to the Communications Department Act

The minister's first duty is to draw up, suggest to the Government, apply and supervise a communications policy for Québec. The Act will define the Department's powers in order to facilitate the coordination of all the State bodies contributing to the development of the policy.

Since the Department was only set up in December, 1969, and various government communications bodies were already in existence at that time, its rôle as principal coordinator of activities as regards communications will naturally require institutional readjustments if State projects in the field concerned are to work efficiently and harmoniously. Legislative measures will be proposed to this end.

3- Amendments to the Québec Broadcasting Bureau Act

The Québec Broadcasting Bureau's rôle as producer of audio-visual documents has not only been confirmed, but stressed. To enable the Bureau to center its activities on this fundamental and necessary work, legislative measures have been passed conferring duties marginally related to the Bureau's activities on the Department of Communications which was created after the last act dealing with the Québec Broadcasting Bureau. The Department is now in a better position to assume these duties involving the coordination of production and broadcasting as well as those involving the acquisition and use of communications equipment.

Moreover, the rôle of advisor to public bodies in these matters is more particularly related to the Department's functions. Various legislative measures will be proposed to this end and will set up the agreements necessary for the harmonious use of different means of communications by the governmental bodies.

4- A Communications Council

While drawing up and continuously developing its communications policy, Québec must establish constant and harmonious relations with the people and particularly with those groups which use communications media and those which provide communications equipment and services.

In view of these objectives, a Communications Council could provide the very representation required. Within the framework of the duties and resources which the Council might be given, it could:

(a) either on the Minister's request or on its own initiative, advise the Minister of Communications on any matter under his jurisdiction in order to constantly improve Québec's communications policy;

(b) encourage fruitful and harmonious relations between the Department of Communications, those who provide communications equipment and services and those who use them.

III- JURISDICTIONAL MATTERS

The Davey Report, and more particularly the Telecommission's report to the Federal Minister of Communications stresses the absolute necessity for a global communications policy. The introduction and content of this document, moreover, underlines the immense importance this has for Québec.

The unheard of progress in communications media and techniques and in the daily use to which they are put leads us to conclude that the problem of jurisdiction and competence over communications cannot really be broached without innovations and precisions, not only in the Constitution but also in Québec legislation.

Communications are irreplaceable in that they are definitely one of the main guarantees of a society's particular characteristics: its language and culture, its personality and its customs. In fact, a government's communications policy reveals its ultimate goals. A government reveals its attitude towards the collective expression of the human community for which it is responsible by the use it makes of this instrument which is both an agent of change and a means of establishing community relations.

First and foremost, it is up to Québec to elaborate a communications policy. Such a policy cannot be dissociated from the development of Québec's education system, from Québec's culture, from all that belongs to its very character. If this policy is to be coordinated with that of the other governments and fit into the North American milieu, it must first satisfy Québec's priorities and thus become a guarantee of the continued existence and the normal development of our society as a dynamic part of the Canadian and the North American reality.

Moreover, Québec is not alone in attributing such importance to communications: the position taken by the Government of Ontario in the April 1971 Speech from the Throne, is not very different from ours as regards the objectives set out.

Consequently, bilateral and multilateral discussions should be initiated to bring the interested governments together. In no way could such discussions result in Québec neglecting its responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

This working paper is not an end in itself but only a starting point enumerating certain projects which must be carried out within the framework of a policy for servicing the citizens and the people of Québec.

As the studies and consultations, carried out by the Department and later by the general council of communications are brought to an end, the Department will make available to all interested persons a detailed description of the concrete action it plans to take, especially in the following areas:

1- the technical infrastructure necessary for carrying out the Multi-Media Project and, generally, educational television in Québec;

2- a Québec communications and distribution network for educational, administrative and cultural purposes, especially after the development or expansion of the Multi-Media Project;

3- Government publications and productions;

4- scientific research and the training of specialized personnel in communications;

5- Québec participation in Canadian satellite activities and in the Franco-Québec satellite communications project;

6- general Government regulations on communications.

This list of the topics to be studied by the Government and upon which decisions will be made is not restrictive; nor is it drawn up in chronological order or in order of importance. As far as communications are concerned, however, it does contain the principal points to be discussed by the Government over the next few months.

QUEBEC'S POLICY
ON COMMUNITY CABLES

MAY 1971

To the population of Québec, the communications sector represents a tool just as essential for its development as education and social policy. It can thus be regarded as a part of the global "cultural" aspect of the Québec personality.

The Government of Québec understands how important it is to equip this sector with the necessary elements for its full development. It becomes obvious then that within a true communications policy, the cable industry occupies a top-drawer position.

It just happens that in this particular area, Québec enjoys a pioneering position. In fact, it was in Montréal, in the early fifties, that one of the first community cable companies in Canada saw the light of day.

Although not quite twenty years old, Québec's cable industry comprises some 140 to 175 separate companies, according to available information, and serves over 17 per cent of homes, mostly in cities.

Destined to a rapid growth, especially in centers where installation conditions appear more favorable, the industry is remarkable for the size of each enterprise, which has from 20 to 92,000 subscribers, and for the geographic spread of its activities. Even though, in order of intensity of use, the St. Maurice Valley, Eastern Townships, Ottawa, Montréal and Québec City regions have a significant proportion of cable facilities. The Gaspé Peninsula, the North Shore as well as Abitibi and Lake St. John regions are not without them.

At the start, the "TV community antenna" enterprise merely substituted for individual television roof antennas a single common antenna which picked up signals and distributed them by using a network of one-directional cables feeding TV sets in the homes of subscribers.

As it developed, the industry discovered a new dimension to its possibilities and, moreover, its true specific and essential vocation. Under the pressure of the needs of the milieu, it tends more and more to create its own live or recorded local or regional programs. The relative importance of the original antenna is

fading to be replaced by the new system of closed-circuit telecommunications. Autonomous programming requires new production centers, pre-recorded tapes and films. In short, as it becomes less dependent upon off-air television reception, it is gradually changing to create a personality of its own and is more and more described as "cable broadcasting". The impact of such an evolution will be keenly felt tomorrow.

Faced with such a situation, particularly with "cable broadcasting", we have a right to ask what is, what will be or what ought to be Québec's policy?

In the first place, communications techniques must serve human communications. Just as the government plans and organizes the road system on its own territory, thus controlling the directional flow of traffic and ultimately the relations between cities, so it should be its responsibility (and not that of another authority) to see to the general planning and development of communications. This challenge of a new democracy involves the very future of Québec and the fate of its people.

On its own teritory, Québec owns the material means of communications, whose rate of use is one of the highest in the world: its telephone, cable, radio

and television, printed information, audio-visual and data processing systems are all highly developed. The sum total of these already existing elements is gigantic, and it does not include what is yet to come.

Cable Broadcasting: A Public Service

By reason of its existence and the services it provides, cable industry should be considered and therefore regulated as "a public service".

Indeed, to the extent cable has become or is in the course of becoming a necessary tool for individual access, among other things, to instruction and education, to social and cultural exchanges, to guidance and leadership, and to information of all kinds on the municipal, local, regional and provincial levels which are within its bailiwick, it rests with the government responsible for these fundamental rights and their exercise to recognize cable as a public service and regulate it as such.

If the basis of this recognition of the status of public service is of a sociological order, the practical manifestations of this recognition are of different kinds.

Economic Considerations

The community cable industry, whatever its

present economic performance, is characterized by a highly speculative and empirical attitude. On the one hand, we have to consider the actual investment per subscriber and, on the other, the income realized. Therefore, when a company is sold, it is not surprising to see that the basic criterion, the predominant factor in the evaluation of a system is its capacity to make profits with no great concern for the actual value of the investment.

For its part, the telephone industry already has the status of a public service. It generally limits itself to predicting its gross revenue on the basis of a 25 to 33 per cent profit on the investments required in order not to exceed, after the usual deductions, the tariff ceiling in terms of the net revenue determined by the public service boards.

Such is not the case with the cable industry: the annual gross revenue sometimes reaches 100 per cent, or thereabouts, of the investments. Obviously this liberal tariff system allows for real overall operating costs which add to any industry's long-term instability as regards the needs it must meet.

It is important to dwell on an economic - industrial phenomenon experienced in Québec concerning the telephone. At one time, that particular industry numbered more than 350 separate enterprises. Today,

about 40 are left. We can expect that within five years we will be able to count them on our fingers, for a number of economic reasons: family-owned firms, succession problems, administrative and technical inability to keep up with a higher quality of service made imperative by unending new refinements, and so forth.

Where does the cable industry stand? After twenty years, more than 150 separate companies serve about 17 per cent of Québec. If the present trend persists at the same rate, how many companies would be needed to cover 80 per cent of the population? 700? 800? To be trimmed down later to how many? Ten or 20? This is a costly process which must not be repeated.

And this is the rocky industrial road the Government wishes to shun, in the best interest of the people of Québec. It does not want to drive any entrepreneur to the poorhouse, but it objects to having Quebecers pay twice as much as necessary to obtain, in the end, the same service. For, according to the industrial pattern adopted, the economic burden imposed on the people would swell twofold.

Industrial Pattern

Nationalizing the cable industry is not being considered. But from now on society is going to demand

more coherence in the organization of its public services. This is why the government strongly encourages the realization of an industrial pattern which will take into consideration both economic imperatives and social needs.

It could thus be a question of organizing better structured and financially vigourous cable enterprises, less numerous but larger in terms of territory covered, which would be definitively the property of the people of Québec through their own economic reserves such as the Québec Deposit Fund, our insurance companies, Caisses Populaires, financial institutions, and so forth.

Applying the concept of public service in many respects involves a change in approach on the part of the cable industry. Therefore, from an economic view point, what it will lose in speculative hopes, it will gain in stability of income and development. It will be in a better position to plan its expansion, and its access to capital will be made easier. This will mean a new type of investment, enjoying greater security, undoubtedly less extravagant profits, but these will be more regular and protected from the unexpected, and there will be more investors. It will become easier to consider investments in terms of a social contribution.

The public service status of cable broadcasting companies will compel them to give service at the least possible cost to the largest number of people. The resulting benefits cannot be overlooked: given the already

mentioned sociological factors, a greater value will be placed on the use of the cable, and the number of subscribers will be boosted. Expansion and higher returns will be made easier.

It is true, as regards cable broadcasting, that the Federal Government is a few steps ahead because it has occupied "de facto" this area of jurisdiction whereas up to now, Québec has merely stated in a vague and timid way that it came under provincial jurisdiction, without seriously and truly providing itself with the necessary instruments to exercise this jurisdiction.

If we wish Québec's policy in the matter of communications to be coherent, this question must be quickly settled and Québec must act at once.

Thus cable broadcasting ought to come under the authority of the Québec Government, through its Public Service Board. Cable enterprises nearly always being set up as territorial monopolies enjoying exclusive privileges, the state may, for its part, enjoin them to take upon themselves full responsibility towards the "captive" public by obliging them to give service to all the people of Québec in accordance with set conditions and rules, to whatever extent circumstances progressively permit. These circumstances could include sufficient demographic density, technical possibilities or economic viability. This is not the case at present.

The Québec Public Service Board will then have to define and adopt a general policy on the use of cable. The regulations will be based on the general policy of the Government of Québec concerning communications in order that cable broadcasting be truly at the service of the population and not the other way around. Therefore the Board will have to:

1- Fix "fair and reasonable rates" according to actual investments as in the case of the telephone industry. Not only will the Board protect the consumer from excessive rates and conditions, it will also prevent all speculation, something unthinkable in a public service. The present $5 to $8 monthly payments could be cut down, or at least services increased.

2- In cooperation with the federal authorities who could set norms and specifications of national scope, determine technical norms such as the quality of signals transmitted or equipment used.

3- Promote expansion, and the implementation of the service and of conditions in order that the large majority of Québec homes be served. If we allow the present trend to continue, we can expect it will cost about one billion dollars instead of 500 million dollars to supply 85 per cent of the Québec population. It is clear that our society cannot bear such an economic burden.

4- Encourage and promote quality programming and, consequently, exercise the necessary control to this end: indeed we think that programming ought to come from the collectivity as well as from the owner of the enterprise. Therefore local communities must participate fully in program planning, for the industry exists primarily for them.

5- Organize and coordinate technological changes: the present cable will quickly become outdated. As soon as we can we must consider polyvalent use of coaxial cables which can by themselves provide all the necessary or available communications services to each home in Québec: telephone, cable broadcasting, telemetry such as Hydro-Québec meter readings, data processing, access to educational information available from schools, universities and public libraries, remote control of electronic brains transmitting orders to home appliances, and so on.

A Realistic and Immediately Possible Solution

It is a fact that the telephone companies themselves own already about 80 per cent of the main television cables; cable companies rent them from the telephone companies and merely connect the secondary cables which they provide for each home subscriber.

A more vigourous cable industry would be in a better position to negotiate favorable rental prices with telephone companies. The essential thing is to find the most economical solution. If need be, cable enterprises could themselves own the cable if they could do it under more favorable conditions.

There is no question of the telephone companies becoming cable enterprises. "Program content" does not concern them. Nevertheless, they can absorb cable technology; they already have the necessary infrastructure and access to capital under reasonable conditions, the power to service a maximum number of homes. They also have a conception of tariffs which already meets the requirements of the common good "public service" tradition which makes easier the state's rôle of regulator.

As for the telephone industry, it is clear that its technological participation in the development of cable broadcasting requires that it also come under the jurisdiction of the Québec Board.

Of the more than 300 telephone companies in Canada, all come under provincial jurisdiction except three. It would therefore appear essential that telephone companies called upon to participate in this way in the development of cable broadcasting come under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Board with regard to their activities on Québec territory.

Present Cable Programming in Québec

Each owner of a community cable enterprise in Québec presently determines, for all practical purposes, the programs it distributes. He chooses television channels which transmit by cable and, should the occasion arise, is free to prepare the local or regional programming effected directly by cable; there is no need to pick up on transmit signals.

It is essential to promote local programming. It is at this level that public opinion is heard, that the daily rhythm of life is perceived and that the concerns of real life are dealt with. This is where the freedom of expression takes shape.

It is through local production that the true vocation and nature of cable is manifested. In this sense, cable is for all practical purposes a municipal phenomenon, therefore a provincial one as well. In this sense also it contributes to communications in a unique way and it is used and perceived as the preferred instrument of local communities.

Local production increases costs and must be financially supported by the community. We know that sooner or later we will have to consider this kind of financing. Let us remember that when radio made its appearance, the

press blocked as far as it could its access to advertising; this was also the case with television. This situation eventually sorted itself out. Cable also needs revenue insofar as it produces its own original programs. We cannot stop this production. On the contrary, we must help it.

As a matter of fact, it is important that Québec take over as soon as possible the jurisdiction of all communications on its territory.

Radio broadcasting must adjust itself

The backbone of the Canadian television system is made up of two French networks, the second to come into operation during autumn 1971, and two English networks, to which one could in part add the competing neighbouring American networks. This system covers entertainment television and, for reasons of human and financial potential, it is difficult to see how it could increase much in the next few years.

Homes have a right to receive this entertainment television, but they are justified also in asking for other public services, especially for educational television, community television and various data processing services. If the cable were integrated with telecommunications rather than with broadcasting, it would not compete with already

existing services, but it could provide other services already asked for. This is why we must draw a very clear line between the functions of production, broadcasting with its attendant programming and transmission.

This corresponds to the report of the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media (Vol.II-pp. 375 and following) especially concerning the future of cable, the importance given it by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and the division of ownership between the public utility firm (coaxial cable) and the operator (the rest of the installation).

Constitutional and Legal Considerations

The inevitable radical change from wave broadcasting to cable broadcasting, instead of being artificially and briefly restrained for the benefit of past investments, must be carried out progressively and smoothly.

Through an important change in technology, the "principal recommendations" of the Aird Commission again become relevant. If we have to recognize along with the authors of the 1929 Report that "Canadian radio listeners want Canadian broadcasting", that is to say essentially distinct from that of the United States, we must honestly add that the commissioners roundly recommended:

(a) "That broadcasting should be placed on a basis of public service and that the stations providing a service of this kind should be owned and operated by one national company; that provincial authorities should have full control over the programs of the station or stations in their respective areas." (1)

Of more immediate concern to us and directly connected with television broadcasting, is the statement made by the Committee on Broadcasting in its Report addressed to the central Government in 1957;

"Our terms of reference specifically excluded community-antenna television services (CATV), but we inevitably found ourselves drawn into consideration of this complex subject because of its actual and potentiel effects on television generally." (2)

It is no less revealing that the very first sentence of this Report stated explicitly:

"The only thing that really matters in broadcasting is program content; all the rest is housekeeping." (3)

(1) REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON RADIO BROADCASTING, (AIRD REPORT), Ottawa, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1929. "Principal Recommendations" (a), (c), (d) and (e), P. 12

(2) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BROADCASTING (FOWLER REPORT II), Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1965, P. 243.

(3) Ibid., P. 3

This is an essential proposal that makes clear the glaring contradiction of the Federal Government in wanting to establish at the legislative, administrative, institutional and international levels the cogency of the fundamental and universally recognized distinction between broadcasting and communications while refusing to acknowledge the legitimacy of this distinction on the constitutional level and with regard to provinces.

In any case, it appears that the extent of the Federal jurisdiction over radio communications recognized by the Privy Council does not imply a similar competence in the field of radio broadcasting and even less in that of television broadcasting.

There exists an instrumental interdependence between radio and television broadcasting on the one hand and telecommunications on the other, but one is not subject to the other. This relation is comparable to that existing between the newspaper and printing.

The final result is that the Government of Québec has the firm intention to exercise its full jurisdiction over community cables in order to meet the fundamental specific needs of the people. We shall provide ourselves with the instruments to carry out this policy. We have everything which is necessary to contribute in an original way to the modern world of communications.

SERVICE DE LA POLYCOPIE
Février 1973